

Braley Statement on U.S.-South Korea Free Trade Agreement

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 28, 2010

Washington, DC - Congressman Bruce Braley (D-Iowa) issued the following statement today after President Barack Obama announced he would reopen negotiations of the U.S.-South Korea Free Trade Agreement at the G-20 Summit this weekend. To encourage responsible trade policy, Braley and the House Populist Caucus introduced the American Jobs First Platform on April 19.

"I have serious concerns about President Obama's plan to move forward with the South Korea Free Trade Agreement," Braley said. "As American families are continuing to get back on their feet after the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, we must ensure that we do not enter into any trade agreements that put the interests of foreign corporations ahead of America's middle class families. While recognizing the impact that this agreement will have on Iowa's farmers and manufacturers, I am hopeful that we can open up agricultural export markets while also preventing jobs from going overseas.

"I strongly encourage President Obama and US Trade Representative Ron Kirk to evaluate this trade agreement and make any modifications necessary to protect American workers. I strongly encourage President Obama and Trade Representative Kirk to employ the principles outlined in the Populist Caucus' American Jobs First Platform to make sure American families have a level playing field on which to compete with foreign corporations."

The American Jobs First Platform consists of the following four bills introduced in the 111th Congress. These bills would require the United States to make an honest and comprehensive assessment of America's current trade policies and set us on a path towards a new, improved model for trade agreements, reducing the trade deficit, and reinvigorating American manufacturing:

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H.R. 3012, the Trade Reform, Accountability, Development, and Employment (TRADE) Act, would require a comprehensive GAO review of existing major trade pacts and spell out what must be included in trade agreements, including core standards on labor, the environment, food and product safety, agriculture, human rights, currency anti-manipulation, national security, procurement, and investment, and also what must not be included in FTAs, including Buy American bans, anti-sweatshop rule bans, and new rights for foreign investors to promote outsourcing. The bill also ensures strong enforcement of these standards, and would require the President to submit renegotiation plans for current trade agreements so that they include these core provisions before Congressional consideration of additional agreements. This bill would help reverse the negative effects of job-killing trade deals like NAFTA and CAFTA and would ensure that both our current and future trade agreements are fair and put American workers on a level playing field.

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H.R. 1875, the End the Trade Deficit Act, would establish the Emergency Commission to End the Trade Deficit to document the causes and consequences of the trade deficit and to develop a plan to eliminate the trade deficit within the next 10 years. This bill would also place a moratorium on new FTAs until the Commission has issued a final report and Congress has conducted hearings on the Commission recommendations to end the trade deficit. The elimination of the trade deficit by 2019 would support millions of additional U.S. manufacturing jobs.

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H.R. 4692, the National Manufacturing Strategy Act would require the Administration to convene an interagency Manufacturing Strategy Task Force to examine the current domestic and international environment for U.S. manufacturing and to develop a National Manufacturing Strategy that includes recommendations to sustain and increase employment, increase global competitiveness, and increase resilience to global economic trends in the U.S. manufacturing sector. This bill seeks to proactively create and sustain good American manufacturing jobs.

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H.R. 4678, the Foreign Manufacturers Legal Accountability Act would require foreign manufacturers doing business in the U.S. to identify a registered agent authorized to accept service of process on behalf of the manufacturer. Registering an agent would constitute an acceptance of jurisdiction of the state in which the agent is located.

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